



State of Louisiana
Animal Welfare Commission

Office of the Governor

P.O. Box 60630, New Orleans, LA 70160

(504) 219-4593

November 2, 2011

West Baton Rouge Parish Officials
[sent via email]

Dear West Baton Rouge Parish Government Officials,

I am sending representatives of West Baton Rouge (WBR) Parish the attached inspection report regarding the WBR Animal Shelter. This report was recently approved by the Louisiana Animal Welfare Commission (LAWC).

I wanted to acknowledge that the commission has received word that many corrections have been made or are in the process of being made to bring suggested improvements to the shelter. LAWC is very appreciative of the positive response and the commission anticipates a mutually beneficial relationship in the future.

Again, thank you so much for your efforts to improve the WBR Animal Shelter

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gary A. Balsamo".

Gary A. Balsamo, DVM, MPH&TM, Chairman
Louisiana Animal Welfare Commission

Attachment:

Louisiana Animal Welfare Commission Assessment Report for Animal Shelter Facilities in Louisiana

...to ensure and promote the proper treatment and well-being of animals

Louisiana Animal Welfare Commission (LAWC) Assessment Report for Animal Shelter Facilities in Louisiana

Date **August 18, 2011**

Inspectors: **Gary Balsamo, State Public Health Veterinarian; Aristide Marshall, RS; Margaret George and Dr. Phillip Dupont, Commissioners (LAWC)**

Name of Facility **West Baton Rouge Parish Animal Shelter**

There are several state laws that set minimum legal requirements for animal shelters, impoundment facilities, and quarantine facilities. They include...

- Louisiana minimum legal requirements for animal shelters, impoundment facilities and quarantine facilities, Title 3, Chapter 17, Louisiana Revised Statutes 2431 et seq.
 - This statute addresses requirements for veterinary treatment of animals, limitations on fees, authority of parish governments to adopt, general shelter standards, shelter construction, shelter operating procedures, sterilization requirements, adoption standards, and branding.
- Continuing education requirements for certified animal euthanasia technicians, Louisiana Revised Statutes , Title 37, Chapter 18B, Louisiana Revised Statutes 1551 et seq.
- The control of rabies and other zoonotic diseases, Louisiana Administrative Code, Chapter 51, Part III
- American Veterinary Medical Association Guidelines on Euthanasia (http://www.avma.org/issues/animal_welfare/euthanasia.pdf)

You should familiarize yourself with these laws and any requirements that may pertain to your facility or its employees.

Many features and practices that enhance facility operations for the animals or the facility staff are not addressed in the above statutes. LAWC considers the recommendations of the American Veterinary Medical Association, the National Animal Control Association, the Humane Society of the United States, and the Association of Shelter Veterinarians in shelter evaluations. Resources are listed below:

- National Animal Control Association Guidelines (<http://www.nacanet.org/guidelines.html>)
- Humane Society of the United States Guidelines for the Operation of an Animal Shelter (http://www.animalsheltering.org/resource_library/policies_and_guidelines/guidelines_for_animal_shelter_operations.html)
- Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters, Association of Shelter Veterinarians (http://www.sheltervet.org/associations/4853/files/Standards%20final%20bookmarks_with%20security.pdf)

The list of questions below should be retained and utilized for self evaluations on a routine basis. This list contains features and practices that strengthen facility operations. Some are required by law (these are labeled as "**MANDATED**") and are reiterated in this supplement as a reinforcement of their requirement.

LAWC Comments and suggestions are added under each item in the assessment.

A. Animal Euthanasia

1. ☒Y ☐N Have staff who perform euthanasia successfully completed a **MANDATED** Louisiana Board of Veterinary Medicine-approved euthanasia training course within 120 days of initial employment and earned the required 6 hours of continuing education credits annually?
Dr. Ray McClure, a licensed veterinarian, performs all euthanasias for the facility.
2. ☐Y ☒N Is a written protocol available for the euthanasia of ill or injured animals in the field or before the end of the impoundment period?
LAWC recognizes the importance of written policies for procedures at public animal shelters. The staff of the West Baton Rouge Parish Shelter does not, at present, have written policies governing any of the shelter's procedures. LAWC recommends that management finalize and publish written policies for storage of food and supplies, shelter hygiene, employee training, isolation of animals, euthanasia, feeding, and shelter oversight. These protocols will assist in training employees and should reduce the chance for inadvertent errors.
3. ☐Y ☒N Is a written protocol available for routine euthanasia?
See A2.

Questions 4-10 are for facilities using injectable euthanasia:

4. ☐Y ☐N If a written protocol is available, does the protocol require two or more people to be present to perform injectable euthanasia techniques?
NA
5. ☒Y ☐N Are the injectable euthanasia standards **MANDATED** in the latest report of the American Veterinary Medical Association on Euthanasia, being met?
6. ☐Y ☒N Is there a sturdy, sanitizable table in the euthanasia room?
There is no euthanasia room. There appear to be several rooms that can be used exclusively or almost exclusively for euthanasia. One example is a ward that is used for snakes and also rats that are raised to feed the snakes. Keeping reptiles for long periods of time in a shelter around small dogs and cats is not recommended. Management stated that a reptile rescue group is scheduled to remove the animals. LAWC recommends that this removal be done with haste and that one of the shelter rooms be converted to a dedicated euthanasia room. A sturdy, sanitizable table for euthanasia should also be installed. Performing euthanasia on the floor can be dangerous for shelter personnel.
7. ☐Y ☐N Is the lighting sufficient to allow easy visualization of the injection site?
NA. There is no euthanasia room.

8. ☐Y ☐N Are the controlled drugs stored in a securely locked cabinet?
NA. All euthanasia drugs are provided on an ad hoc basis by Dr. McClure.
9. ☐Y ☐N If controlled drugs are used in the field, are they securely locked in the animal control vehicle?
NA. Euthanasia drugs are not used in the field.
10. ☒Y ☐N Are euthanasia drug logs used, kept current, and available for inspection?

Question 11 is for facilities using carbon monoxide euthanasia:

11. ☐Y ☐N Does the carbon monoxide chamber meet standards for safe operation and is the machine in good working order?
NA. There is NO carbon monoxide chamber on the premises.

B. Management:

1. ☒Y ☐N Has the facility manager successfully completed a Louisiana Animal Control Association-approved Animal Control Officer Basic Training course?
2. ☒Y ☐N Is an office available at the facility, or elsewhere, for facility staff and/or animal control officers?
The reception room is used as the office for the shelter director. There are two additional desks in a separate room that could also be used by staff as office space.
3. ☒Y ☐N Is the facility attended by a veterinarian or is there a relationship established with one or more local veterinarians to provide advice, assistance, or treatment to animals?
A private veterinarian is contracted to perform all euthanasias. In the case of an animal taken in with severe disease or injuries, the animal is transported to a private veterinary clinic in Plaquemine, LA. Veterinarians and veterinary students associated with the LSU shelter improvement program also perform veterinary activities and spays and neuters at the shelter.
4. ☐Y ☒N Does this facility employ a full-time veterinarian
5. ☐Y ☒N Are formal **MANDATED** semi-annual inspections conducted by an authorized parish official to ensure compliance with state statutes?
Public works for West Baton Rouge Parish performs building maintenance inspections regularly, however no public body performs regular evaluations of the shelter regarding animal control and sheltering. LAWC recommends that the shelter identify some entity to perform regularly scheduled semi-annual evaluations of the animal control and sheltering functions of the facility.
6. ☐Y ☒N Are standard operation procedures (SOP) written for the facility's operation, including housing, cleaning, animal care, and facility maintenance?
See A2.
7. ☒Y ☐N Are animals separated by their behavior and age in addition to their state of health, species, sex, and size (separation by health, age (puppies and kittens separated from adults) species, sex (unneutered males separated from females) is **MANDATED** by law)?
8. ☒Y ☐N Does the facility have a sterilization program for its adopted animals (this is **MANDATED** for animal control facilities under La. R.S. 2472)?

9. ☐Y ☒N Have staff been immunized against rabies?
The Louisiana Office of Public Health recommends that all animal control personnel be vaccinated against rabies, as is recommended by CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices. Every two year antibody titers are recommended for all vaccinated animal contact personnel that handle wildlife from terrestrial rabies endemic areas of the state, which may include this area of the state. Information on acquiring antibody titers is available through the State Public Health Veterinarian (504-219-4593). Animal contact staff should be vaccinated as soon as possible.
10. ☒Y ☐N Do animal contact staff work with terrestrial wildlife or bats?
11. ☐Y ☒N Are staff rabies vaccinations evidenced by adequate titers (This is only recommended if bats are handled routinely. This is also recommended if terrestrial wildlife are handled routinely in skunk variant rabies endemic areas of the state)?
See B9.
12. ☒Y ☐N Does this shelter restrict or ban adoptions of pit bulls?
13. ☒Y ☐N Does this shelter restrict or ban adoptions of any other breed or type animal?
The shelter manager indicated that Chow-chows are also not offered for adoption, although this is not a written rule.
14. ☐Y ☒N Does this shelter sell or donate live animals for education or research?
15. ☐Y ☒N Was this shelter a plaintiff or defendant in any civil or criminal court case in the past year?
16. ☐Y ☒N Are shelter standards included in city or parish ordinances?
Although the West Baton Rouge Parish Animal Shelter abides by parish ordinances in issues related to stray and nuisance animals, holding periods for impoundment, redemption of animals, vicious dogs, registration and rabies control; shelter standards, such as those specified in the Louisiana Revised Statutes, are not included in the ordinance. Local government officials are strongly urged to include shelter standards in local ordinances.
17. ☒Y ☐N Are hours and emergency telephone prominently displayed on building exterior as **MANDATED** by La. R.S. 2463?
Prominently displayed on the gate entering the property.
18. ☐Y ☒N Does the shelter have a receiving area for the public to bring in or adopt animals?
No dedicated area exists. Animals entering the shelter are brought to the back outdoor gated reception driveway. This is really not a reception area and may lack security for transferring cats.
19. ☒Y ☐N Does the shelter have an area for the public to acquaint themselves with adoptable animals?
The grounds surrounding the shelter are used for familiarization.

C. Records:

1. ☐Y ☒N Are records computerized?

Use of computer records including digital photographs of animals is a commonly used method of animal identification. LAWC has been introduced to several shelter management software packages. Some of these packages may be available to Louisiana shelters at no cost. LAWC encourages the use of shelter management software packages in Louisiana shelters. Please contact LAWC if interested in learning more about these programs and other methods of enhanced record keeping.

2. ☒Y ☐N Do the animal records include accurate descriptions of the animals? Suggested information includes: impounding officer's name, date and time of capture, location of capture, tag and/or collar identification, breed, sex, age, size (height and weight), coat color and pattern, ear and tail types, description of markings and unusual findings (scars, tattoos, microchips), and the condition of the animal.
Records are accurate, however some of the suggestions above are not included. Examples are: name of impounding ACO, time of capture, and tag or microchip number, if available.
3. ☐Y ☒N Do the animals' records document daily observation?
LAWC recommends some type of date list or check list in which a caretaker acknowledges that the health status of the animal is checked daily.
4. ☒Y ☐N Are incoming animals scanned for microchips and/or identification tattoos?

D. General Structure:

1. ☐Y ☒N Is a secured area used to safely unload and load animals to prevent their escape?
The offloading area in the rear of the building is not fenced separately. During hours of operation dogs and cats could escape through the open front gate. Should funding become available separate fencing for security could better secure this area.
2. ☒Y ☐N Is the facility built in such a way that it prevents access by unauthorized persons?
3. ☒Y ☐N Is a secure area for storing vehicles available?
The grounds are large enough for secure storage of vehicles within the fenced in compound.
4. ☐Y ☒N Is a secure area for storing outdoor equipment available?
There is, in reality, no real outdoor equipment storage area.
5. ☐Y ☒N Are drains covered with grates to prevent animals from stepping into them?
The trough drains in animal runs could be outfitted for drain covers, should funding become available. Drain covers are better for animal safety and health, and also for employee safety.
6. ☐Y ☒N Are drains covered with grates to prevent people from stepping into them?
Inspectors noted several small circular drains in heavily trafficked areas of the facility. The open drains may be a danger for animals, employees and visitors to the facility.
7. ☐Y ☒N Are there problems apparent with drainage or moisture at this facility?

E. Water and Electric Power:

1. ☒Y ☐N Are an adequate number of water faucets available?
2. ☒Y ☐N Are the water hoses strong and in good repair?
3. ☒Y ☐N Are adequate hose bibs and hoses available?
4. ☒Y ☐N Are hoses kept off the floor when not in use?
5. ☒Y ☐N Is hot water available?
6. ☒Y ☐N Is a backup generator available to provide electricity during power outages?
7. ☐Y ☒N In the animal areas, are the electrical outlets mounted at least 3-4 feet above the floor?
This is not a newly constructed building, therefore the outlets are not at increased height (> 3 to 4 ft.).
8. ☒Y ☐N In the animal areas, do the electrical outlets have protective coverings?
9. ☐Y ☒N Are the electrical outlets, in areas of water use, Ground Fault Interrupt (GFI) protected?
Not all.
10. ☐Y ☒N Are there adequate sinks to wash food and water bowls and other equipment?
Although additional sinks and work tables are desirable, the small size of the shelter may not be amenable to installation of additional lavatories.
11. ☐Y ☒N If a bathtub or large sink is used to bathe animals or wash equipment, is there adequate toe space under it to allow staff to work comfortably?
There is no toe space and the tub is installed low to the ground. The lack of toe space is uncomfortable for employees and also may restrict movement and limit the control of the shelter worker when utilizing the tub. The height of the tub may also subject the workers to risk of injury while bathing animals. Should funds become available, the tub should be replaced with a tub designed specifically for bathing dogs and cats.
12. ☒Y ☐N Is there a restroom for staff use?

F. Waste Disposal:

1. ☒Y ☐N Is there a holding area for carcasses awaiting final disposal?
2. ☒Y ☐N Is there a freezer or refrigerator to store animal carcasses until final disposal?
3. ☒Y ☐N Do the dog pen floors slope ¼-½ inch per foot toward drains and gutters?
4. ☒Y ☐N Is animal waste washed into a sewer or septic system?
5. ☒Y ☐N Does this shelter employ special practices for handling medical or potentially infectious waste?
Sharps that have been used are stored in "sharps disposal" containers. The shelter has never disposed of these containers, but shelter management assure

inspectors that the containers will be disposed of by transporting the used sharps to a medical entity for disposal.

G. Storage:

1. ☐Y ☒N Is adequate space available for facility supplies?
It appears that additional storage area would be helpful in freeing up areas for use as a dedicated euthanasia room, isolation for cats, etc.
2. ☐Y ☒N Are cleaning chemicals stored in a separate area, room, or cabinet?
Inspectors observed several instances where cleaning supplies were stored above or on the same shelf as food products.
3. ☒Y ☐N Is adequate space available to store the current quantity of animal food?
4. ☐Y ☒N Is the food storage area clean and free of spilled food?
Inspectors observed dry dog food bags that were not sufficiently sealed. Inspectors also observed food in shelter storage areas that were not indicated to be food storage areas by management. In one storage room, loose kibbles of dry food were observed in boxes near areas where dry food bags were discovered. Although space is limited, organization of cleaning, food bowls, blankets and towels, and cleaning supplies could be better achieved by limiting each category of item to a specific location. Also, more organized and better hygienic storage of dry food should ensure that the shelter will forego problems seen at other shelters with infestations of insects and rodents.
5. ☒Y ☐N Is there a procedure to use older food first?
6. ☐Y ☒N Are storage shelves and racks at least 12 inches off the floor and at least 4 inches from walls to permit adequate air circulation around food products?
Dry food was observed as described in G4. Also, dry food was stored in bags on the ground. Dry food should be stored in racks or on pallets at least 12 inches off the floor and at least 4 inches from the walls. Improper storage permits food to be more susceptible to infestation and lack of air circulation may accelerate unwanted premature degeneration of food products.
7. ☐Y ☒N Are food storage containers adequately sealed against infestation by insects or other vermin?
Dry food should not be stored in open bags, but should be immediately transferred to sealed containers.

H. Primary Enclosures:

1. ☐Y ☒N Is one dog housed per pen?
Although there is no written policy, the management limits cage volume to two adult dogs and 4 puppies. The importance of explicit written policies has already been stated.
2. ☒Y ☐N Do cat cages offer a minimum of 4 square feet per cat?
3. ☒Y ☐N Are the dog pen side walls solid to at least 4 –5 feet in height between animals?
4. ☒Y ☐N Do the pens have tops on them?
5. ☒Y ☐N If the pens have tops, do the tops offer at least a 7-foot clearance?

6. ☒Y ☐N Does the chain-link fencing of the dog pens appear to be at least 9-gauge wire (heavier than typical fences)?
7. ☒Y ☐N Is the dog-pen fencing securely attached to the frames and gates?
8. ☒Y ☐N Do the dog pens offer indoor and outdoor access?
9. ☒Y ☐N Are guillotine doors present between the indoor and outdoor runs?
10. ☒Y ☐N If guillotine doors are present, can these doors be operated by staff outside the pen?
11. ☒Y ☐N Do the gates on the cages and pens latch securely?
12. ☒Y ☐N Is there a way to prevent the general public from entering the animal containment area without the knowledge of facility staff?
13. ☐Y ☒N Are primary enclosures constructed of materials that are easily sanitized?
Cat cages are not stainless steel or fiberglass and appear to be constructed of painted metal. As long as these cages are maintained in non-deteriorated state, they can be adequately sanitized. Management should maintain vigilance for rusting or pitting of the cages. Rusting or pitting may cause absence of smooth non-porous surfaces which may interfere with effective sanitation.
14. ☒Y ☐N Are primary enclosures well maintained and in good repair?

I. Feeding/ Watering:

1. ☐Y ☒N Is a work table that can be easily sanitized available in the food preparation area?
There is no table in the food storage area. Food prep is done in the animal wards and tables are not present. Again, the construction of the shelter does not lend itself to installation of food prep tables in the wards.
2. ☒Y ☐N Are water bowls secured in the cages to prevent tipping?
3. ☒Y ☐N Are food and water bowls washed and sanitized daily?
4. ☐Y ☒N Are shelves or racks present to store food and water containers that are drying?
Inspectors observed that bowls were left on a counter to dry. Drying racks are effective in ensuring that bowls are adequately dried prior to use or storage. Dry, clean food and water bowls assist toward the goal to maintain proper hygiene. Excessive moisture may promote the growth of microorganisms on bowls that may not have been cleaned thoroughly.

J. Pest Control:

1. ☐Y ☒N Is the premise maintained so that the potential for rodents and insect pests are kept to a minimum?

The inspectors observed that food storage could be improved as mentioned in previous sections. WBR Parish mosquito control monitors and sprays for insects, however there is no deployed rodent control program.

2. ☒Y ☐N Does the facility have a program to remove external parasites from animals as they enter the facility?
3. ☒Y ☐N If a program exists, does the product's label include the target species?
4. ☐Y ☐N If a program exists, are personal protective equipment and training offered to staff who use parasiticides?
NA. Medications in tablet form are used to treat for ectoparasites.

K. Rabies Quarantine

1. ☒Y ☐N Does the facility quarantine animals for rabies observation? *If "no," skip the remainder of this section.*
2. ☐Y ☐N Is it easy to distinguish which animals are quarantined for rabies observation and which animals are housed in quarantine pens due to "overflow"?
NA. We did not observe an animal under observation. It does appear that other animals are present in the ward where quarantine takes place, due to the relatively small size of the facility. Management is encouraged to utilize locks or fasteners on quarantine cages, restrict cleaning and feeding to experienced caretakers, and to restrict access to the quarantine area by chains or ropes with signs warning of the presence of an animal under observation for rabies.
3. ☐Y ☒N Is public access prohibited from the quarantine area by a secure door or gate?
See K2.
4. ☐Y ☐N If a secure door or gate is not available, is there a barrier to exclude the public from the quarantine area?
See K2.
5. ☒Y ☐N Are there guillotine doors to confine rabies-suspect dogs in one part of the pen during cleaning or inclement weather?
6. ☒Y ☐N If guillotine doors are available, can these doors be operated by staff outside the pen?
7. ☐Y ☒N Should testing of animal brains be required, would this shelter submit the sample to the OPH laboratory for analysis?
It appears that samples are sent to the Veterinary lab at LSU.
8. ☐Y ☒N Does this shelter participate in the OPH rabies testing and surveillance program?
OPH reminds the shelter that, in instances where human victims are involved, the Public Health Laboratory will perform testing free of charge. The only requirement is that the submission be cleared first by the state public health veterinarian (504-568-8315) or a member of the Infectious Disease Epidemiology Section Staff (800-256-2748). Data pursuant to bites processed by the public health laboratory also are included in rabies surveillance data submitted to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

L. Disease: regarding the following diseases, please rate the severity of the problem with these diseases over the past year.

- | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|--|----------------------------------|
| 1. | <input type="checkbox"/> Major | <input type="checkbox"/> Minor | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No problem | Intestinal parasites |
| 2. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Major | <input type="checkbox"/> Minor | <input type="checkbox"/> No problem | Scabies (mange) |
| 3. | <input type="checkbox"/> Major | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor | <input type="checkbox"/> No problem | Ringworm (dermatophytes) |
| 4. | <input type="checkbox"/> Major | <input type="checkbox"/> Minor | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No problem | Parvovirus |
| 5. | <input type="checkbox"/> Major | <input type="checkbox"/> Minor | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No problem | Canine distemper |
| 6. | <input type="checkbox"/> Major | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor | <input type="checkbox"/> No problem | Canine cough |
| 7. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Major | <input type="checkbox"/> Minor | <input type="checkbox"/> No problem | Feline upper respiratory disease |
| 8. | <input type="checkbox"/> Major | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor | <input type="checkbox"/> No problem | Feline diarrhea |
| 9. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Major | <input type="checkbox"/> Minor | <input type="checkbox"/> No problem | Canine heartworm disease |
| 10. | <input type="checkbox"/> Major | <input type="checkbox"/> Minor | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No problem | Feline leukemia |

M. Infection Control

1. ☐Y ☒N Are all animals isolated on intake to this facility and screened in a separate area for disease and temperament before being placed in the general population?
Animals are placed in cohorts as mentioned above, but only separated by caging, not placed in a separate area. The relatively small size of the shelter may preclude true isolation, however space could be re-arranged to better isolate diseased or aggressive animals.
2. ☒Y ☐N Are all animals vaccinated (Dogs: distemper, adenovirus, parainfluenza, parvovirus, leptospirosis, bordetella. Cats: rhinotracheitis, calicivirus, chlamydia, panleukopenia, feline leukemia) upon intake to the facility?
3. ☐Y ☐N Are all animals vaccinated after being determined to be adoptable?
NA
4. ☒Y ☒N Are incoming animals checked for heartworms?
Not all animals are checked for heartworms, only those examined by the LSU Shelter Improvement Program are checked.
- a. ☐Y ☒N (only adoptable are checked for heartworms)
Not all adoptable animals are checked for heartworms. Those dogs over thirty lbs. body weight are not checked. A member of the shelter staff could be trained to perform, in the least, direct microscopic exams for heartworms, should a microscope be made available.
5. ☒Y ☐N Are incoming animals dewormed for intestinal parasites?
- a. ☐Y ☐N (only adoptable are dewormed for intestinal parasites)
NA
6. ☒Y ☐N Are rabies vaccines administered at this facility?
Again, only smaller dogs and cats that are attended by the LSU Shelter Improvement Program.
7. ☐Y ☒N Are rabies vaccines required after pets are adopted out of the facility?
Although a good proportion of animals adopted from the facility is vaccinated for rabies prior to release, some animals are released with no requirement to be vaccinated for rabies. Shelter management informed inspectors that persons who adopt most animals are instructed verbally to seek rabies vaccinations after release. The Louisiana State Sanitary Code (Title 51, Part III, Chapter 1 of the Louisiana Administrative Code) states, "No person shall own, keep or have

in his custody a dog, cat, or ferret over three months of age that has not been vaccinated against rabies by a licensed veterinarian. Every owner of a dog, cat, or ferret shall cause said animal to be vaccinated initially with a series of two vaccinations, the first to be administered at three months of age, the second to be administered one year after the initial vaccination. Dogs, cats, or ferrets initially vaccinated later than three months of age shall also be administered a series of two vaccines, the second vaccine to be given one year after the initial vaccination. Subsequent booster vaccines shall be administered one year after the administration of a vaccine that confers one year of immunity and three years after the administration of a vaccine that confers three years of immunity. Approved vaccines and durations of immunity are listed in the most recent Compendium of Animal Rabies Prevention and Control prepared by the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians, Inc." The West Baton Rouge Parish shelter does not ensure that all adopted animals are vaccinated for rabies. It is nearly a universal policy of all public shelters to ensure compliance with rabies laws. Most shelters originally came into existence as part of a nationwide initiative to decrease the number of incident cases of rabies virus infection in humans. In fact, animal control and pet vaccine requirements have been successful in reducing the incidence of human rabies in the United States to an average of one or two cases per year, although nothing about the epidemiology of the disease in nature has changed. Bat variants of rabies virus circulate within West Baton Rouge Parish and surrounding areas and pose a danger to all warm blooded animals in the area, including pets and humans. The presence of a rabid dog, cat, or ferret in populated areas is considered a public health emergency. Studies have demonstrated that compliance with vaccine requirements for pets in some areas of Louisiana is woefully inadequate. A primary part of the mission of any animal control shelter is rabies control and prevention. Louisiana OPH implores shelters in the state to ensure vaccine compliance in adopted pets. Several methods are employed by shelters to ensure rabies vaccination compliance in adopted animals. LAWC and OPH are available for consultation to suggest accepted methods. The shelter director should consider mandating in writing the vaccination of all animals that leave the shelter. Other shelters in small communities often charge a nominal fee that covers the cost of rabies vaccination and issue vouchers that are honored at veterinary clinics throughout the community. Still other shelters include a nominal fee for adoption that includes the cost of rabies vaccines administered at the shelter itself.

N. Population Control

1. ☐Y ☒N Are all animals determined to be adoptable spayed or neutered prior to adoption?
Only animals attended by the LSU Shelter Improvement Program are spayed or neutered.
2. ☒Y ☐N Are only some animals spayed or neutered prior to adoption?
3. ☒Y ☐N Are intact animals that are adopted required to be spayed or neutered after adoption?

Additional comments:

Compliments:

The West Baton Rouge Parish deserves compliments for the following excellent examples of shelter operations:

- Every animal that is euthanized is pre-sedated.
- An excellent facility for after hours drop offs is provided for the public.
- Curtains to shelter animals from wind and cold are provided during the winter months.
- The assistance provided by the LSU Shelter Improvement Program is very beneficial to the shelter. Should funding become available in the future, the shelter should consider that WBR Parish Shelter personnel or contractors provide these services on a regular basis.
- Although the animal housing areas are not air conditioned, ventilation is superb and the shelter is relatively cool. There was no detectable odor present in any area of the facility.
- Guillotine doors on cages that permit the animal to enter the outdoor section of dog runs are optimal for cleaning and for exposure to the outdoors.

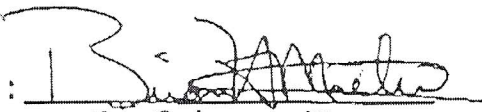
The following were observed by inspectors and should be improved if the shelter hopes to obtain the highest status:

- The shelter does not have a euthanasia room, however space seems to be available to provide an exclusive euthanasia facility or, in the least, a multi-purpose room that could serve as a proper environment for euthanasia when the procedure is required.
- A table is not used for euthanasia.
- Euthanasia drugs are not kept at the facility. Emergency cases that require immediate euthanasia are transported to a veterinarian for the procedure.
- The fence protecting the sewage pond is not well-maintained and could lead to unintended exposures to sewage.
- Although inspectors were shown a room that was used for food storage, food was noticed to be stored in other areas of the facility, much of which was stored improperly.
- Additional work tables or carts would be useful to staff in preparation of food for distribution to the animals.
- Should funding become available, LAWC recommends disposable or stainless steel litter boxes. Plastic litter boxes can become damaged or pitted and may be difficult to adequately sanitize.
- Ants were observed in the kennel area. Inspectors were told that WBR Parish Mosquito Control sprays for insects, however the presence of ants may indicate that the program is geared toward controlling mosquitoes, not crawling insects.

- The presence of snakes that have not been offered for rescue, and the presence of a rat colony for feeding suggest several potential problems. This facility is a public animal shelter and not a site for holding exotic pets, especially those that, upon escape, could pose a danger for resident animals. LAWC recommends that the animals be surrendered to a reputable reptile rescue group and that the rats be offered for adoption.
- Food is stored in the same refrigerator as vaccines and various medications. Vaccines and other medications should never be stored in the same refrigerator with food items. The potential for cross contamination of either item should not be ignored.
- The makeshift cat enclosure, although an innovative structure built to address the lack of adequate feline housing, is substantially substandard. This cat housing should not be in the canine run area. The runs are cleaned by hosing the cages and, therefore, cats are subjected to additional stress.
- **The shelter does not ensure that all animals adopted from the facility are vaccinated with rabies vaccine and therefore does not enforce compliance with the public health sanitary code. This is a flagrant violation of the intent of animal shelters in the state; however this violation is not specified in the shelter standards and certainly does not preclude the individual pet owners from adhering to public health requirements. Upon reviewing the information provided by inspectors, the Louisiana Animal Welfare Commission decided to assess this facility as “meeting the standard” for animal shelters in the state, with the caveat that this omission should be corrected as soon as possible. Failure to correct the lack of rabies vaccine compliance will result in future failure of the shelter.**
A mechanism exists to easily rectify the situation. The shelter should assess a fee for adoption that will cover the cost of rabies vaccination. Vaccine compliance could be assured by distributing a voucher that could be redeemed for the cost of a rabies vaccine at private veterinary offices in the area, as is the practice at many shelters throughout the state. Charging for adoption is recommended additionally because the practice is an additional mode of attempting to verify that the prospective adopter is committed to behaving as a responsible pet owner. Additional funds for other necessary changes could also be generated.

RATING:

- ☐ Generally exceeds standards
- ☒ Meets standards
- ☐ Needs significant improvements to meet standard

Brian Melius, DVM :  Date: 10-12-11
Chairman, Shelter Inspection Subcommittee
LAWC